

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 TRSE-00  
/053 W

-----130952 240220Z /75

R 231402Z FEB 78  
FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7425  
USIA WASHDC  
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI  
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0891

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: SOPN, PEPR, ET, US  
SUBJ: US MEDIA ON HORN OF AFRICA

REF: STATE 45038

1. RECOMMENDATION: WHILE RECOGNIZING VOA'S DESIRE TO  
MAINTAIN MAXIMUM INDEPENDENCE FROM EXECUTIVE BRANCH EDITORIAL  
DIRECTION, EMBASSY BELIEVES IT WOULD BE WORTHWHILE TO BRIEF  
RESPONSIBLE VOA OFFICIALS ON NEW EMPHASIS IN USG POLICY  
TOWARD CONFLICT IN HORN, I.E. MSG CONVEYED TO EPMG BY AARON.  
BASIS FOR THIS RECOMMENDATION FOLLOWS:

2. WHEN POLCOUNS DELIVERED DEPT STATEMENT ON MILITARY SHIP-  
MENTS TO ETHIOPIA FEB 22, MOFA DIRECTOR AMERICAN AFFAIRS  
BERHANE DERESSE USED OCCASION TO POINT OUT RECENT EXAMPLES  
OF WHAT HE TERMED BIASED REPORTING AGAINST ETHIOPIA ON PART  
OF AMERICAN JOURNALISTS. HE MENTIONED WHITE HOUSE ANNOUNCE-  
MENT REFERRING TO PMAC CHAIRMAN MENGISTU'S  
ASSURANCES TO SPECIAL EMISSARY AARON THAT ETHIOPIA DOES NOT  
INTEND TO CROSS SOMALI FRONTIER IN OGADEN CONFLICT. BERHANE  
SAID THAT NEWS DESPATCHES HE HAD SEEN COUPLED THIS ANNOUNCE-  
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MENT WITH REMINDER OF RECENT STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT CARTER  
THAT SUCH A CROSSING WOULD CONSTITUTE THREAT TO WORLD  
PEACE. IMPLICATION OF SUCH REPORTING IN BERHANE'S VIEW WAS  
THAT MENGISTU WAS MAKING HIS ASSURANCE UNDER PRESSURE, WHEREAS  
IN FACT HE AND OTHER TOP EPMG OFFICIALS HAD MADE SAME ASSUR-  
ANCE ON SEVERAL PREVIOUS OCCASIONS. IT WAS JUST THIS KIND OF  
REPORTING THAT RAISED QUESTIONS IN EPMG LEADERS' MINDS

REGARDING US INTENTIONS IN HORN. (EMBASSY NOTES FEB 21 WIRE-  
LESS FILE USES LANGUAGE SIMILAR TO THAT CRITICIZED BY  
BERHANE.)

3. BERHANE THEN REFERRED TO FEB 21 EVENING VOA BROADCAST AS  
FURTHER EVIDENCE OF US BIAS IN FAVOR OF SOMALIA. ACCORDING  
TO BERHANE, VOA REPORTING ON HORN DWELT ON ACTIVITIES OF  
WESTERN SOMALIA LIBERATION FRONT AND TENDED TO IGNORE FACT  
THAT INVASION WAS ENGINEERED AND BEING CARRIED OUT BY GOVERN-  
MENT OF SOMALIA. HE ASKED IF EMBASSY COULD DO ANYTHING TO  
ASSURE MORE OBJECTIVE HANDLING OF WAR BY VOA, SO THAT "IT  
COULD MAINTAIN ITS REPUTATION OF BEING VOICE OF AMERICA AND  
NOT OF SOMALIA."

4. POLCOUNS SUGGESTED THAT EPMG ASSEMBLE COLLECTION OF TEXTS  
IT CONSIDERED TO BE OBJECTIONABLE AS BASIS FOR FURTHER DIS-  
CUSSIONS ON THIS SUBJECT. HE ALSO NOTED THAT VOA CORRESPON-  
DENT IN NAIROBI WAS CURRENTLY SEEKING VISA TO PURSUE FIRST-  
HAND NEWS COVERAGE IN ETHIOPIA, AND THAT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL  
TO BRING "OFFENSIVE" BROADCAST MATERIAL DIRECTLY TO HIS  
ATTENTION, IF HE WERE ADMITTED.

MATHERON

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 jan 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** RADIO BROADCASTING, COMBAT OPERATIONS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 23 feb 1978  
**Decaption Date:** 01 jan 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 20 Mar 2014  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1978ADDIS00891  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** n/a  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** GS  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Expiration:**  
**Film Number:** D780085-0279  
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**Page Count:** 2  
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**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** 78 STATE 45038  
**Retention:** 0  
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**Review Content Flags:**  
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**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
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**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
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**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** US MEDIA ON HORN OF AFRICA  
**TAGS:** SOPN, PEPR, ETEL, PBOR, ET, US, VOA  
**To:** STATE USIA  
**Type:** TE  
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**Review Markings:**  
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